

# Inside ICE



This is what the home page of the Elite Torrents Web site looked like after ICE and FBI agents shut down the peer-to-peer piracy operation.

## ICE, FBI SHUT DOWN INTERNET PEER-TO-PEER PIRACY NETWORK

WASHINGTON, D.C. — ICE and FBI agents have conducted the first criminal enforcement action targeting individuals committing copyright infringement on peer-to-peer (P2P) networks using cutting edge file-sharing technology known as BitTorrent.

On May 25, agents executed 10 search warrants across the United States against leading members of a sophisticated P2P network known as Elite Torrents. Employing technology known as BitTorrent, the Elite Torrents network attracted more than 133,000 members and, in the last four months, allegedly facilitated the illegal distribution of more than 17,800 titles - including movies and software - that were downloaded 2.1 million times.

The content selection available on the Elite Torrents network was virtually

unlimited and often included illegal copies of copyrighted works before they were available in retail stores or movie theaters. For example, the final entry in the Star Wars series, "Episode III - Revenge of the Sith," was available for downloading on the network more than six hours before it was first shown in theaters. In the next 24 hours, it was downloaded more than 10,000 times.

"Intellectual property pirates and counterfeiters cost U.S. industry hundreds of billions of dollars in lost revenue every year from the illegal sale of copyrighted goods," said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia, "and new online file-sharing technologies make their job even easier. Through today's landmark enforcement actions, ICE and the FBI have shut down

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# ICE, FBI CRACK DOWN ON INTERNET PIRATES

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a group of online criminals who were using legitimate technology to create one-stop shopping for the illegal sharing of movies, games, software and music."

"The theft of copyrighted material is far from a victimless crime," said Assistant Director Louis M. Reigel of the FBI's Cyber Division. "When thieves steal this data, they are taking jobs away from hard workers in industry, which adversely impacts the U.S. economy. The FBI remains committed to working with our partners in law enforcement at all levels and private industry to identify and take action against those responsible."

Building on the success of Operation Gridlock, a similar takedown announced by federal law enforcement last August that has already led to the felony convictions of three P2P copyright thieves, Operation D-Elite targeted the administra-

tors and "first providers" or suppliers of copyrighted content to the Elite Torrents network. By utilizing BitTorrent, the newest generation of P2P technology, Elite Torrents members could download even the largest files - such as those associated with movies and software - far faster than was possible using more traditional P2P technology.

"Our goal is to shut down as much of this illegal operation as quickly as possible to stem the serious financial damage to the victims of this high-tech piracy - the people who labor to produce these copyrighted products," said Acting Assistant Attorney General John C. Richter of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "Today's crack-down sends a clear and unmistakable message to anyone involved in the online theft of copyrighted works that they cannot hide behind new technology."

Operation D-Elite is being conducted jointly by ICE and the FBI

as part of the Computer And Technology Crime High Tech Response Team ("CATCH"), a San Diego task force of specially trained prosecutors and law enforcement officers who focus on high-tech crime. Federal and state member agencies of CATCH include ICE, the FBI, the Department of Justice, the San Diego District Attorney's Office, San Diego Police Department, the San Diego Sheriff's Department, and San Diego County Probation.

Operation D-Elite was coordinated and will be prosecuted by the Justice Department's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section, with the assistance and support of Computer Hacking and Intellectual Property (CHIP) coordinators in San Diego and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in Arizona, Illinois, Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

The Motion Picture Association of America provided valuable assistance to the investigation.

## ICE ARRESTS 26 ILLEGAL WORKERS AT SHIPYARD

**PASCAGOULA, Miss.** — ICE special agents arrested 26 illegal aliens working at the Northrop Grumman Shipyard in Pascagoula, Miss., June 1.

ICE agents, assisted by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, used a civil search warrant to search the facility for suspected undocu-

mented workers identified through examination of records maintained by the Northrop Grumman security office.

The 26 illegal workers were identified as having had access to or have attempted to access the Northrop Grumman Shipyard. They will be presented for prosecution in the Southern District of Mississippi for using fraudulent documents to gain employment, falsely claiming to be U.S. citizens or illegal re-entry to the United States after deportation. No evidence has been found implicating either the subcontractors or Northrop Grumman in any criminal or administrative violations.

This investigation is part of an ongoing post-9/11 ICE enforcement ini-

tiative that focuses on businesses with sensitive sites and critical infrastructure facilities such as airports, defense installations and bio-agriculture industries. Since the initiative began, more than 1,100 illegal workers have been arrested at airports alone.

"Protecting the integrity of the ship building industry in Mississippi is a crucial part of ICE's interior enforcement strategy," said Michael A. Holt, Special Agent-in-Charge for ICE investigations in New Orleans. "When an individual uses fraudulent or false documents to get a job, they hide their identity and possible criminal history. We need to know the identities of the people are that are working on our critical infrastructure programs."

**Inside ICE is an e-newsletter produced by the ICE Office of Public Affairs to inform the public about the mission, operations and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Please send comments and contributions to:**

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Editor

# ICE RETURNS ANTIQUITIES TO AFGHANISTAN

The people of Afghanistan regained an important part of their culture and history May 23 when ICE Assistant Secretary Michael J. Garcia returned two 2,000-year-old coins that had been recovered by ICE to Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Assistant Secretary Garcia returned the cultural antiquities, which had been stolen from the Afghan people, to President Karzai in ceremonies at the Smithsonian Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. President Karzai was in Washington, D.C., for meetings with President Bush.

The rare Indo-Greek coins of Agathokles are dated between 171 and 160 B.C. Only six of these coins are believed to exist, making them extremely rare and valuable to collectors. But as artifacts of history for the Afghan people, they are priceless.

“What a great day!” President Karzai exclaimed when receiving the coins. “There is a memory in Afghanistan, and that memory is living. We like to connect that memory of the past to a better future for our country, a future of peace and prosperity.”

Some aspects of the coins’ recent history remain shrouded in mystery. First discovered by a French archaeological expedition in 1971, the coins were part of a collection of some 30,000 coins that were looted from the Afghan National Museum by either Mujahideen or Taliban factions in the late 1980s.

In September 2003, a confidential informant provided information to ICE Boston’s Office of Investigations and claimed that one ancient Afghan coin had been brought into the United States from Pakistan and was in the possession of a man living in Maryland.

ICE Baltimore Special Agents Ray Abruzzese and Alex Miris were assigned the case. Abruzzese and Miris located the subject in Burtonsville, Md., and questioned him about the coin.

## *See Related Photo, Page 6*

The Maryland broker admitted that the owner gave him the coins in late 2002 in order to broker a sale. The broker said that after receiving the coins he did extensive research on them to try and determine what their value might be on the open market. That research, the broker said, led him to believe the coins were stolen.

Despite that fact, the broker admitted trying to sell the coins after learning they were stolen. His ef-

forts were unsuccessful, however, because legitimate coin collectors also believed the coins were stolen and refused to buy them, knowing they could never claim ownership or publish their acquisition.

The broker claimed that he tried without success to return the coins to the owner. When that failed, the broker said, he put the coins in a safe deposit box at a bank in Maryland, and the coins were still there.

Abruzzese and Miris took the broker to the bank, where he retrieved the coins from the safety deposit box and voluntarily turned them over to the ICE agents. ICE held the coins while they were being authenticated and until arrangements could be made to return them to the Afghan people.

## ICE ARRESTS CALIFORNIA MAN FOR ARRANGING SEX WITH FLA. JUVENILE

**LOS ANGELES, Calif.** — A man pleaded not guilty in federal court in Florida May 31 to charges he traveled to that state to engage in sexual activity with a juvenile and used the Internet to entice a minor into engaging in sexual activity.

Adam Statland, 31, was arraigned in Ft. Pierce, Fla. after being indicted by a grand jury. He was arrested at his Lomita home May 6 after ICE agents executed a search warrant at the home and seized several computers. Statland is charged with two counts of travel with intent to engage in a sexual act with a juvenile, and one count of using a facility of interstate commerce - an Internet service - to attempt to persuade, induce, or entice a minor to engage in a sexual activity.

The investigation began when the mother of a 16-year-old Florida girl contacted law enforcement after

discovering her daughter had met an adult on the Internet who lived in California. According to documents filed in the case, the man, subsequently identified as Statland, had flown to Florida and had a sexual encounter with the juvenile.

Statland’s arrest is part of Operation Predator, a comprehensive ICE initiative aimed at those who prey on children, including human traffickers, international sex tourists, Internet pornographers, and foreign national predators whose crimes make them deportable. More than 5,700 child sex offenders have been arrested by ICE nationwide as part of the initiative. ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators.

## WOMAN WHO ENSLAVED CHILD RETURNED TO U.S.

A woman who was the target of an ICE investigation and who fled after her conviction for enslaving an 11-year-old child has been expelled from Cameroon and returned to the United States to serve a lengthy prison sentence.

Theresa Mubang, 42, a naturalized U.S. citizen originally from Cameroon, was returned to the United States May 28.

Last year, a federal jury convicted her of involuntary servitude and harboring an illegal alien for financial gain. On Feb. 28 she was sentenced in absentia to 17 and one-half years in prison and ordered to pay \$100,000 in restitution to the now 18-year-old victim. She was awaiting sentencing while wearing an electronic home detention device when she removed the device and fled.

Because the United States does not have an extradition treaty with Cameroon, Mubang's return rested on cooperation between the countries.

"Cooperation between Cameroon

and the United States has ensured Mubang will serve the prison term she earned," said Marcy Forman, Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Office of Investigations. "This case shows that human trafficking remains a 21st century crime and its victims need champions like U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Diplomatic Security Service, and the Department of Justice."

The crime for which Mubang was convicted began in November 1996 when Mubang used a false passport to bring Evelyn Chumbow, 11 years old at the time, from Cameroon into the United States. Mubang told Chumbow's family that the child would have a better life and an education in American schools.

In fact, Mubang forbade Chumbow from attending school and making friends with other children, and would not allow the child to leave the home except to perform specific tasks. Mubang cut off communication between Chumbow and her family and forced the child to work

as a cook and maid in Mubang's home. Additionally, Mubang made Chumbow care constantly for her sons and sleep on the floor of the children's room. Chumbow was also forced to care for a neighbor's child in the morning and afternoon.

Mubang verbally, mentally and physically abused Chumbow, even using a high-heel shoe, a metal broom handle, a cable TV wire and her fists to severely beat the child. Chumbow escaped Mubang's abuse by running away with a visiting cousin.

As part of the investigation, ICE investigators uncovered that, prior to smuggling Chumbow into the U.S., Mubang brought a nine-year-old Cameroon citizen here. Like Chumbow, that child was also forced to work and was abused.



**Theresa Mubang**

## ICE DEPORTS MEXICAN MAN WANTED FOR COP KILLING

**DURANGO, Colo.** — An illegal alien wanted for killing a Mexican police officer was repatriated back to Mexico May 26 by ICE agents.



**Ventura-Molina**

Jose Luis Ventura-Molina, 48, aka Manuel Avila, was deported after he was arrested following an anonymous tip to ICE agents in Alamosa, Colo. The informant said Ventura-Molina was a fugitive wanted for murdering his son-in-law, a Michoacan, Mexico, police officer, in 2001.

ICE Intelligence and International Affairs offices coordinated collecting information from Mexico's Procuraduria General de Justicia del Estado and the Agencia Federal de Investigaciones and confirmed the warrant through photographic and fingerprint identification.

Ventura-Molina reportedly fled Mexico following the murder and illegally entered the United States in 2002, taking up residence in the Alamosa area using the name Manuel Avila. He was arrested on minor charges by local law enforcement in late 2004 and remained in prison until ICE identified and deported him from the United States.

ICE records revealed Ventura-Molina had previously been arrested and returned to Mexico under his assumed identity because U.S. law enforcement was not aware of the Mexican murder warrant. Ventura-Molina later illegally re-entered the United States.

"Our agents routinely work with all varieties of law enforcement, including international agencies, to bring criminals to justice," said Jeffrey Copp, Special Agent-in-Charge of the ICE Denver office. "It's important that we send a strong signal that criminals will not be allowed to use the United States as a haven from prosecution."



## ICE OFFICERS DEPORT MEN WITH TERRORIST LINKS TO PAKISTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — ICE has deported to Pakistan two individuals with links to terrorist groups.

Khamal Muhammad, 23, is an admitted member of the Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM), a U.S.-designated terrorist organization in Pakistan. HUM is linked to Al Qaeda and its leader is thought to be a close associate of Osama bin Laden.

Muhammad entered the United States on a visa petition filed by his mother and lived in San Francisco. During an interview with ICE agents, Muhammad admitted he had attended a HUM training camp where he was trained in the use of pistols, rifles and grenades.

The other individual, Hamid Sheikh, 41, was living in Philadelphia. Sheikh said he entered the United States illegally in April 1985. Sheikh is affiliated with militant group in Pakistan outlawed by the Pakistani government due to its involvement in massacres and targeted killings.

“These cases demonstrate how ICE is prioritizing for removal those individuals who pose threats to our national security. These two removals also demonstrate the value of ICE’s immigration authorities as critical components in the federal government’s anti-terror efforts,” said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia.

## MAUI MAN GETS TWO YEARS FOR SMUGGLING, MONEY LAUNDERING

HONOLULU, Hawaii — A Maui man who ran an elaborate multi-million dollar marijuana smuggling scheme was sentenced May 26 to two years in prison for money laundering and filing false income tax returns. In addition, Michael Keith Ritter, 56, forfeited \$1 million in cash proceeds from his illegal ventures.

Ritter’s sentencing follows an investigation by ICE and the Internal Revenue Service that revealed he was responsible for importing massive loads of marijuana from Thailand into the United States from the late 1970s through the mid-1980s.

Ritter pleaded guilty last year to money laundering, criminal forfeiture, fraud and making false statements in connection with those activities. Although the drug offenses occurred many years ago, Ritter continued to actively manage his foreign offshore trust fund accounts.

“ICE will continue working with our law enforcement partners to disrupt the trafficking of narcotics and dis-

mantle the criminal enterprises responsible for this activity,” said Hawaii ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Wayne Wills.

Court documents reveal that Ritter participated in at least a dozen ventures using boats to smuggle multi-ton loads of Thai marijuana to the West Coast -- including a 1986 three-ton shipment which grossed more than \$5 million. Ritter concealed these funds in foreign offshore trust fund accounts in Hong Kong and in the Isle of Man, filed U.S. tax returns without reporting all income, and failed to file reports for the foreign offshore trust funds he owned and controlled.

## ICE SENIOR AGENT FRANCISCHELLI LAUDED FOR ARMS INVESTIGATION

The International Organization of Asian Crime Investigators and Specialists has selected ICE Senior Special Agent Maryann Francischelli as the recipient of its 2005 Outstanding Advocate Award of Law Enforcement in Asian Organized Crime.



Senior Special Agent  
Maryann  
Francischelli

Francischelli is a senior special agent with the ICE Office in New Haven, Conn. She received her award May 26.

Francischelli was given the award for her outstanding work as the ICE case agent in an investigation targeting a network that illegally exported military engines for the Black Hawk helicopter from the United States to the People’s Republic of China.

The investigation specifically targeted Kwonhwan Park (a.k.a. Howard Park), a citizen of South Korea, and others for violations of the Arms Export Control Act. Park pleaded guilty to federal charges and is awaiting sentencing.

For more than two years, Park was the subject of an investigation by ICE and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS). Park bought two Black Hawk engines and diverted them to China. He was attempting to buy four more engines when ICE agents began tracking his actions. Park was intercepted by ICE agents on April 1, 2004, at Dulles International Airport in Virginia attempting to depart the United States on a plane bound for Beijing, China. An inspection of Park’s luggage confirmed that he had a sophisticated night vision goggle system manufactured by a U.S. firm that is a military item controlled for export.

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## U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

### ***FREEDOM AND HERITAGE***



*Afghan President Hamid Karzai, left, proudly displays a 2,000-year-old coin presented to him by Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia, right, as Afghan Minister of Culture Sayed Raheen examines the second coin returned to the Afghan people by ICE during ceremonies at the Smithsonian Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., May 23. The two ancient artifacts had been stolen from a museum in Afghanistan and were recovered by ICE agents in the United States. For more details, see the story on Page 3 of this edition of Inside ICE. (Photo by John Tsantes, Smithsonian Institute)*